



Government of the Virgin Islands  
of the United States

**Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA CONTACT PERSON: COMMISSIONER DEVIN CARRINGTON (340) 713-3522**

**August 20, 2015**

**DLCA SPEAKS OF IMPENDING TROPICAL STORM DANNY**

With the intensification of Tropical Storm Danny and the possibility of it heading in the general direction of the Virgin Islands, the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs shall be monitoring businesses to ensure that prices for goods and services essential to storm preparation and recovery are reasonably priced. In that regard, the department is encouraging consumers in the Virgin Islands to assist the agency by immediately reporting instances of suspected price gouging.

"Given the department's current lack of manpower to monitor the hundreds of businesses in the Virgin Islands, it is critical that the consumer assist the department by acting as our eyes and ears to prevent the possibility of price gouging," stated Commissioner Devin Carrington. He added, "I've always advocated greater consumer participation and activism in the business of consumer protection. After all, we are all consumers and should bear some degree of responsibility regarding receiving the best value for our hard earned money. Consumer vigilance and reporting to the department provides an important mechanism through which the department can protect the public from unscrupulous individuals and entities that would seek to take advantage of the consumer during times of emergency", he added.

Based on the Virgin Islands Code, all businesses in the Virgin Islands should have provided a mandated price list of goods and merchandise in stock at the beginning of the Hurricane Season, June 1, with additional lists due the first day of each month during the season. Upon the declaration of emergency by the governor regarding an imminent storm, prices submitted in the listing are frozen so as to prevent unreasonable price increases prior to, during and after the storm. Those prices remain frozen until the governor declares the emergency ended.

The department is currently initiating enforcement action against businesses that have failed to submit the list, the commissioner stated. In addition to a \$5000 fine for failure to do so, those businesses are also subject to a \$200 per day fine for each day the submission of the list are delinquent. Carrington said, "the department's authority to license businesses carries with it the responsibility to regulate them in the interest of the consumer. The department and I take this responsibility seriously and shall aggressively enforce the law," he stated.

*"Serving Businesses and Assisting, Educating, & Protecting Consumers"*

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For further information regarding this issue, or to report instances of possible price gouging, promptly call the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs at the following numbers: 713.3522 on St. Croix; 714.3522 on St. Thomas



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